1: Delobsom--149 I-5 (no date) 1933 FA28 Mossi FA28

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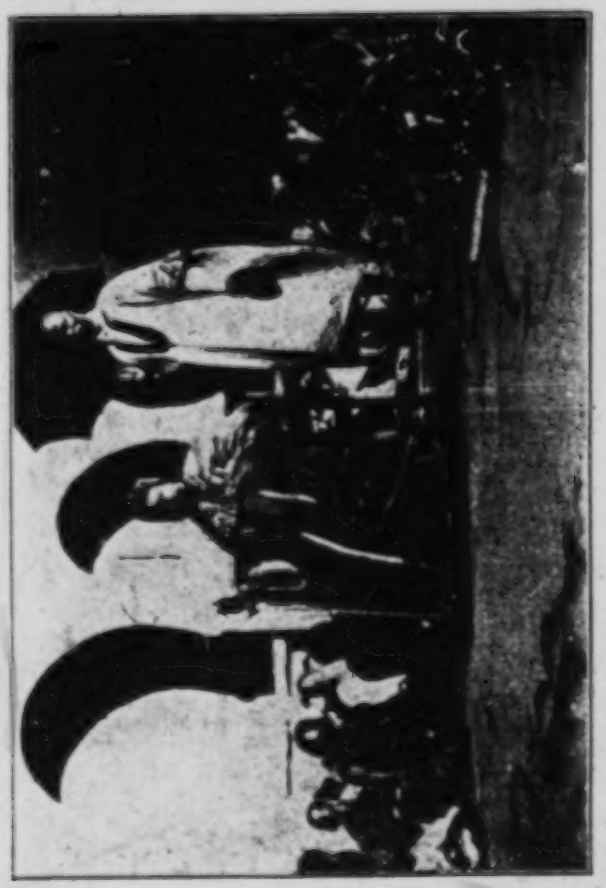

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Mogho Naba
The Ruler of all the Mossi and a Servitor.

From the Mission of the White Fathers
at Ouagadougou.

1: Deloboom--151 1-5 (no date) 1933 FA28 Mossi FA28

1: Delobsom--156 I-5 (no date) 1933 FA28 Mossi FA28

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Native Blacksmith.
From the Mission of the White Fathers at Ouagadougou.

1: Delobsom--157 I-5 (no date) 1933 FA28 Mossi FA28

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The Third Minister of the Mogho Naba (Gounga Naba) among his Servitors.
(The latter wear Christian medals)
From the Mission of the White Fathers at Ouagadougou.

1: Delobsom--159 1-5 (no date) 1933 FA28 Mossi FA28

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Mossi Woman Spinning.
From the Mission of the White Fathers at Ouagadougou.

1: Delobsom--161 I-5 (no date) 1933 FA28 Mossi FA28

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Mossi Weaver.

From the Mission of the White Fathers at Ouagadougou.

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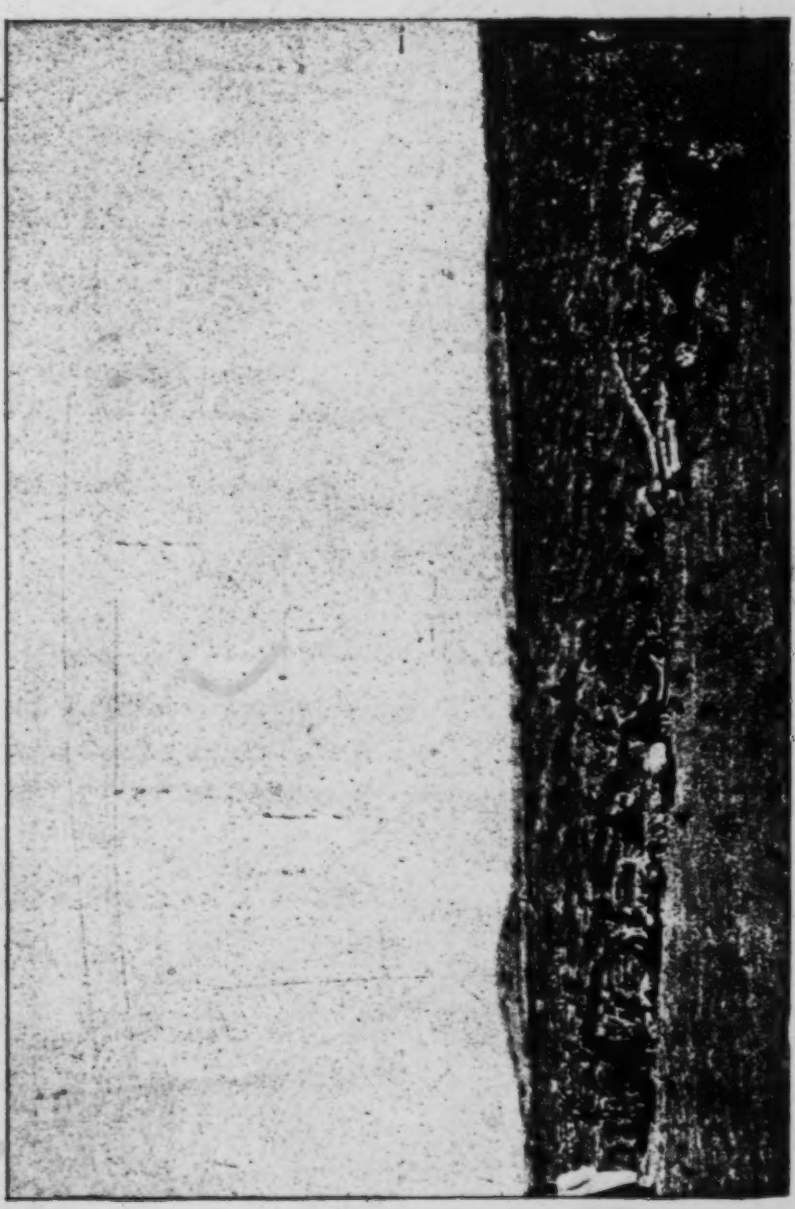

The Bush in Mossi Country.

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2:Mangin--19a M-5 (ca. 1910) 1921 FA28 Mossi FA28

A Mossi Province Chief.

The Moro Naba of the Mossi.

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Above: The Moro Naba. Behind him, his brother, about twelve years old and the head of a large province, flanked by two pages.

Below: The Bullom Naba and his Pages. Behind him, his two Christian sons.

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Above: A Naba and his Men.
Below: Mossi Elders.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

[P.31]

III

KINGSHIP AND CHIEFSHIP

642 Mossi traditional government revolved around the Nanamse, as all Mossi rulers were called. Sometimes the title was also given on an honorific basis to commoners, serfs, or slaves who performed specific duties for a Mogho Naba or a district chief; but the only true Nanamse were persons who traced their descent from Ouedraogo and Oubri.

642 643 The heads of the four Mossi kingdoms—the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou, the Yatenga Naba, the Tenkodogo Naba, and the Fada-N'Gourma Naba—were supreme in their own realms, but there was considerable rivalry among them throughout Mossi history.[1] In terms of closeness of descent from the nation's founders, the Tenkodogo Naba came first, the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou second, and the Yatenga Naba third. The Naba of Fada-N'Gourma was outside the hierarchy. As time passed, the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou gradually became more powerful than the other rulers, even though he recognized the seniority of Tenkodogo and, as we shall see, had difficulty exercising his seniority and supremacy over the Yatenga. Because he was the pre-eminent Mossi ruler, the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou set the general pattern of kingship and chiefship. The heads of the other kingdoms, principalities, districts, and villages tried to approximate the pomp and ceremony of the Ouagadougou court as closely as their resources and etiquette permitted. The pattern of chiefship among the Mossi in general thus differed little from that of the Ouagadougou kingdom.

643 The Mossi of Ouagadougou believed that their Mogho Naba was superior to all other kings. They believed that his realm was the largest in the world, and that no other king was so rich and powerful. He was so awe-inspiring, so "like the sun," that no one dared to look upon his face. It was [516] forbidden to touch his hand, or speak to him from any but a kneeling position with the forehead touching the ground. People were expected to hesitate before pronouncing his name, and no other person was allowed to bear [576]

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

643 the name of the current ruler. When Crozat asked one of his Mossi bearers why Boukary Koutou had chosen a title that means "elephant," the man declared, "He is an elephant; he is king of all kings as the elephant is king of all animals; a great elephant-king he is."[2] Another Moaga, meeting Crozat on the road to Ouagadougou, told him to be prepared to meet a monarch "whose riches are inexhaustible and whose splendor is marvelous. [644] He and his family wear only the most admirable European clothes; a thousand horses stand before his door, and there are more than a thousand women in his house. He is served by one hundred eunuchs; he commands as master 333 chiefs; and when he speaks to them it is as though God himself had spoken; everyone bows down before him and obeys."[3] Crozat, looking at the Mogho Naba through European eyes, did not find the "great [576] king" he had expected. Yet he and later European visitors to the Mossi [516] capital did affirm that all Mossi officials and district chiefs prostrated themselves in obeisance to their sovereign, even if they did not subsequently follow his instructions.[4]

643 796 Many rituals associated with the person and court of the Mogho Naba served to emphasize the high esteem in which he was held by his subjects. For example, the sovereign showed himself every morning at a ceremony called "Ouend pous yan" (literally, "God rises," or "the sun rises") that [114] survives to this day. The name of this ceremony has led many scholars and travelers to assert that traditionally the Mogho Naba was considered a divine king. Dim Delobson states that this ceremony "shows the regard which the Mossi have for their chief, since they compare him to the sun, and thus to a 'god.'"[5] However, the Mossi do not now and probably never did regard their monarchs either as gods or as divine kings. There is a great deal of difference between regarding a man as "powerful and brilliant" like the sun and regarding him as divine. As a matter of fact, the [522] Mossi very often dramatize in humorous fashion the all-too-human frailties of their rulers, without ever considering it sacrilegious to do so. On the other hand, the Mogho Naba, as the supreme ruler, was expected to follow faithfully the strict etiquette demanded by his exalted position.

643 796 644 The morning ceremony was opened by the ruler's chief page, the *soghone-kasanga*, who sprinkled a phylacteric solution around a throne (*guere*) in the courtyard in front of a reception room called the *zongo*. Other pages (*soghondamba*) brought out a large cushion (*naghpure*), the ruler's sword, and other personal accouterments, and placed them on the [292] throne. Still other pages aided the Mogho Naba in his toilet. He was clothed in a large red robe, which symbolized the rising sun; he wore a bonnet surmounted by silver streamers (*wazourfou sebere*), which represented the sun itself.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

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Visitors to the court of Moogho Naba Baoum salute him in the traditional Mossi manner.
From Louis Binger, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée par le pays Kong et le Mossi, 1887–1889* (Paris, 1892).

[p. 178 - A]

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

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The Mogho Naba's daughter, the Napoko, impersonates her deceased father at his funeral ceremonies. Note that she wears one of his robes, his slippers, and his bonnet, and has his sword behind her.

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Mogho Naba Saghn II (1942-57), who was instrumental in reuniting the Mossi people into one territory, the Upper Volta.

[p. 178-8]

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

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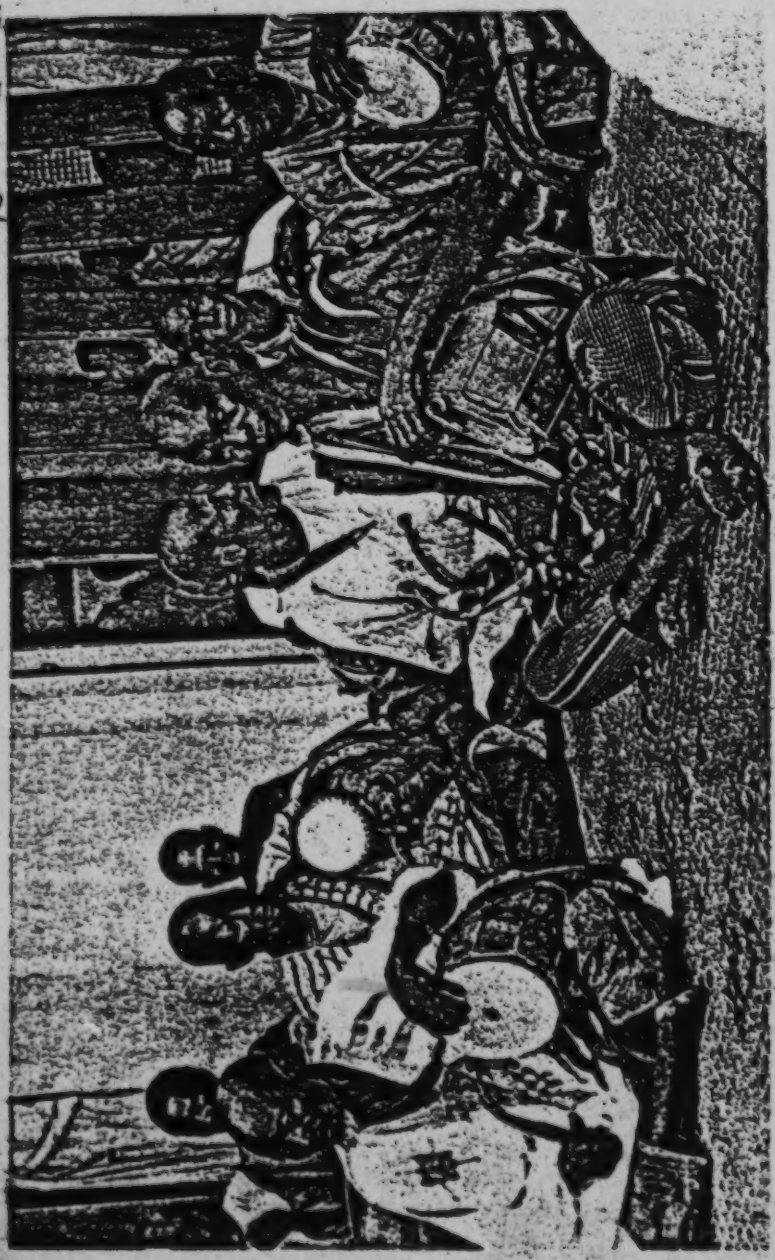

[p. 178-C]

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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Mogho Naba Kougri at court. He is flanked on the right by his pages and musicians, and on the left by members of the Moslem community.

[p. 171-E]

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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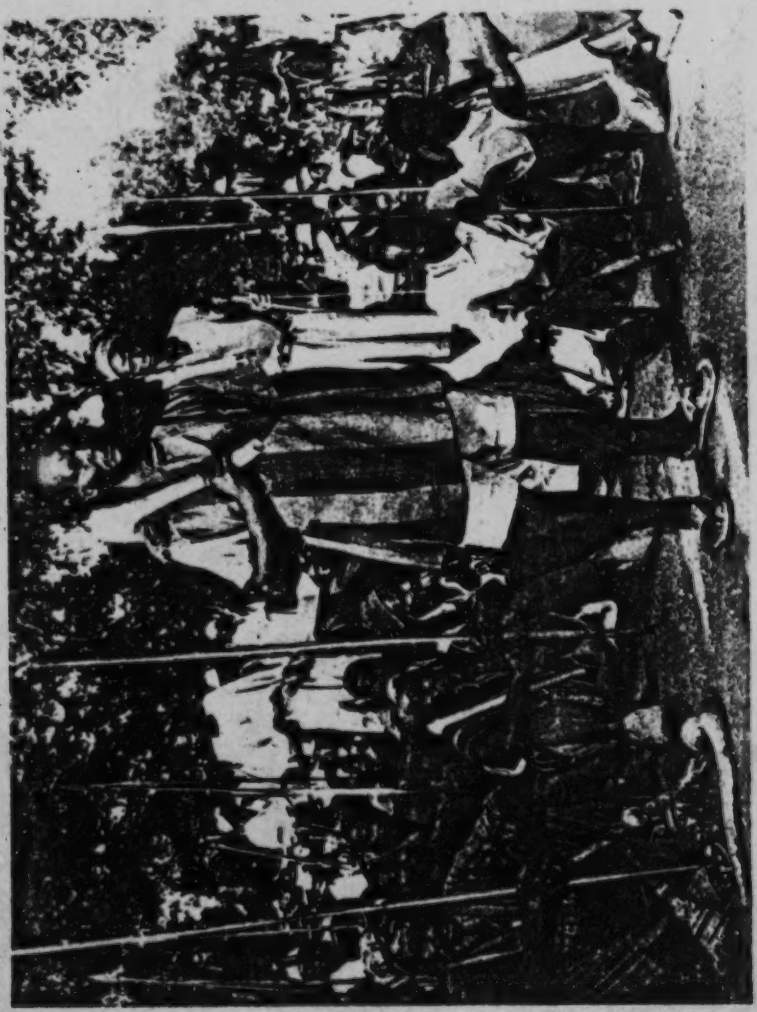

Mogho Naba Kougri's warriors, many bearing traditional weapons, respond to their sovereign's call for aid against the new French administration.

[p. 178 - G]